



LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

77th Year

28 JULY 1978

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TLS

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY • 11 AUGUST 1978 • No 3,981 • 25p

Brodsky and the poetry of exile

Simone Signoret,
Josephine Baker

The moral claims of terrorism

Sea serpents

The ethics of lying

John Rechy's weekend

Does Lacan ex-sist?

Gladstone's diaries

Re-interpreting William Morris

Fiction: Regis Debray,
Herbert Gold, John Hersey

Poets: John Montague,
Andrew Motion, D. J. Enright

Commentary: Cine-tricks,
Czech dissidents



The Flood, from an eighteenth-century Ethiopic hymnary: it is in the exhibition, The Christian Orient, which is at the British Library until September 24 (Catalogue, 80pp and 32 plates. British Museum Publications for the British Library. £2.50 exhibition only).

The language of loneliness

By Henry Gifford

IOSEF BRODSKY:
Koneks prekrasnyy epokli: Stikhot-
vreniya 1964-1971
114pp.
113pp.

Ches' rachi: Stikhotvreniya 1972-
1976
113pp.
Ann Arbor: Ardis/Oxford: Haldun
Books. £2.55 each.

Since 1972 Josef Brodsky, the most talented Russian poet of his generation, has been living in the United States. When some forty years ago Andrey (whom Brodsky knew and admired) made a similar choice, the implications for him were scarcely so grave as for a Russian poet today. Andrey's best work already lay behind him, and he had a price to pay for denunciation; but at least the English language was in living use all around him, at once alien and familiar. He was, indeed, a writer who haunted the *Oxford English Dictionary*, as Emily Dickinson had haunted Webster, and with none of the domestic certainties that Amherst gave her. But his ears were not constantly assailed by a foreign language; he could not know the dread of being estranged from the native heart, and of gradually losing touch with what Mandelstam once called "the formidable and boundless element of the Russian language", and with the creative processes it work in popular speech.

Mandelstam is particularly relevant here, because of all Brodsky's predecessors in that generation—and he has learnt much at various times from Tsvetayeva, Khlebnikov and Mayakovsky—none stands closer to him. Brodsky is now thirty-eight, and so approximately at Mandelstam's age when on the threshold of his greatest period, reflected in the poetry of his Moscow and Voronezh notebooks during the 1930s. Akhmatova described Brodsky as "a real *Vunderkind*", which is how discerning contemporaries saw Mandelstam, and "the younger Osya" resembles him in an refusal to be distracted from poetry. The spirit of Mandelstam must have listened with ironic sympathy to Brodsky's protestations at the trial in 1964 on the charge of parasitism when he tried to enlighten the trustee while woman judge and the retired military man at her side about the nature of his poetry, and the regime it imposed. He told them that poetry comes from God, and when the judge asked "Who put you on the list of poets?" he retorted "Who put me on the list of human beings?" For Brodsky as for

Mandelstam there can be no question of the poet's authority. He explains in one of the new poems here, "Conversation with a Celestial Being" (1970):

... If my soul had a profile
you would see
that it too
is merely a mould from my
sorrowful gift,
that it possessed nothing more,
that together with this it is turned
towards you.

In Mandelstam's generation it was still possible to believe, as Akhmatova believed, that the poet had his place with the people. Akhmatova (until perhaps the very end of her life) felt that emigration was a form of betrayal. But in recent years the Soviet government has been picking off writers and artists from the body politic as though they were lice; and one by one the people most concerned with the advancement of Russian culture have been ejected, or driven to seek for permission to leave. Forty years ago Khodosevich could deplore the sterility of the first emigration from Russia. He had been particularly upset by the fate of the young poet Boris Poplavsky, who died, miserably poor, after an overdose of drugs in Paris. This death (it was apparently not suicide) he saw as symbolizing the loss of hope by Russian culture to sustain it. Khodosevich quoted in another essay Blok's complaint before he died, that Russia had devoured him as a strident sow can devour its own offspring; and it appeared to Khodosevich that the emigration treated its young poets the same way. The Russian abroad had failed to develop a literature, because they did not understand what its character and purpose should be.

The responsibility that lies on

the present emigration is clearly understood, but the basic problem remains. Can a culture survive in dispersal? The Jewish example might seem to indicate that it can, but this was ensured by a continuing religious faith, and by the perpetual hope of "next year in Jerusalem". And the extraordinary manifestation of Jewish artistic genius in the past 150 years has come out of the national heritage of other peoples, enriching and at the same time drawing deeply upon it. Mandelstam, Pasternak, and Brodsky himself illustrate this in Russian poetry. What could even a Pushkin do in exile today when it is no longer possible for him to go and hear the "pure and correct speech" of the Moscow women who like communion bread (if that trade still exists)?

It is natural, then, that the later of these two volumes by Brodsky should interest more. There are excellent pieces in the earlier, which foreshadow the situation he must accept; and the period before his departure shows a mind preparing itself and devising the appropriate forms for the new experience. Already he has found an imperial theme of his own, perhaps taking a hint from Zhigienov Herbar (Brodsky is a translator of Polish verse) in such a poem as "The Return of the Proconsul". The empire that he depicts in a sequence of poems dated 1970 is not hard to locate:

Outside the window all night
in the unwashed garden rustles the
heavy
Asian rain. But the mind is dry...
Brodsky knows English poetry very well, and his intimacy with the Metaphysicals is often evident. One of the more striking images from this sequence, however, recalls rather what Pope found in the gar-

dens of Timon's villa:

A fountain representing a dolphin
in the open sea is completely dry.
Quite understandably: the stone
fish
is able to do even without water,
as it without a fish made from stone.

Such is the verdict of the arbitration court whose sentences are distinguished by dryness.

And in another section the empire is compared with a trident wedged into a too narrow canal:

The rowers thump with their oars
on the dry land,
and stones scrape hard on the slide.
No, never say we are stuck fast!
Movement there is, movement goes
on...

The title poem of this first book announces the end of a "belo epoque" in the city that was once St Petersburg:

Even the wicker chairs are held
by bolts and screws.

Brodsky is well aware that the great age of modern poetry has passed, as he says in this poem, and in another of 1971:

Citizen of a second-rate epoch,
I acknowledge as well that is
my best thoughts and to days
coming
I present them as an attempt to
struggle with asphyxia.

I sit in darkness. And it is no
worse
in the room than the darkness
outside.

The second volume closes with
"A Cape Cod Lullaby" (1975), in
twelve parts, followed by a shorter
poem "December in Florence" (1976). Brodsky is remarkably good

at evoking the spirit of place. The first volume has an annex of poems about Lithuania, the Thames at Chelsea, and poems, too, are about emigration (London), or history (United States), or actual side of the familiar, and the theme of his "Lullaby" is the change of empires. He finds God sweltering in the summer. The eastern end of the Empire sinking into night. The stars are silent on the grass of the night on the pediments are looking for the spirit with its darkens, like a bottle, foraging.

From the patrol car, the police
tinkle the keys of Ray C. C.
When Brodsky, having to be
gauntlet of the "infinite"
the Soviet airport, wrote a
plane, he "saw new clouds
same earth". And then he
looked for meeting of his
lines (under the night
Lobuchevsky):

Man survives, like a fish as he
crawls into the bushes and
goes off, as from the pen in
into the depths of the ocean.

It is remarkable that he
uses the English word "fish"
his Russian poem. The
adaptation has already been
here he touches upon the
aspect of "changing empires"
need to preserve continuity
your own past. In another
plays on these words that he
trinity of association. He has
(one more presumably)
"eagle" at thirty-two) about
old, in the year he migrated.

Growing old! The age of
Of the knowledge that
of truth. Of its other side
(Znamki). Of exile (fig-
In one way nothing has changed
Pur you have in your
the same pen as formerly.

we the same plants. In the
the same droning bumble
flying who knows what to look
It is the same pen, but now
urgently than Mandelstam he
"Save for cold times/these
for times of alarm", and
"Save this speech".

The man who leaves behind
his country to settle where
own language is not spoken
with him as it were a child

traveller's cheque, which cannot
be supplemented. The Brodsky,
coming upon a statue of Mary
Queen of Scots in the Luxembourg,
writes twenty sonnets in her honour,
and says in the first, "I spend what
left of Russian speech/on your
beauty full face and lustreless
shoulders". The group of poems
that precedes "A Cape Cod Lul-

life, which
like the second book itself,
is entitled "A Part of Speech", and
the last but one of them he says:

Life, which
in the mouth,
has its teeth at every meeting.
Of the whole man there is left to
you a part

of speech. A part of speech
in general. A part of speech.
See the whole stretch of the lan-
guage, a part only. Yet for the man
use, a made whole again there is
only one resource: he must cling
on to his participation in the
language.

The poem that closes the second
volume, "December in Florence",
carries an epigraph from Anna
Akmatova: "This man, going
away, did not look back..."
(Brodsky has the right to invoke
Akmatova, if only because she
did him the honour of taking
a line from his poem about her as
epigraph for one of her most signifi-
cant lyrics, "The Last Rose").

The poem to which Brodsky alludes
here is a tribute to Dante for refus-

ing to end his exile by public
"With lighted candle he
did not walk/Through his Florence,
deserted/Perfidious, base, long-
awaited..." Dante did not look
back, as did Ophelia, and again
let's wife, to their own ruin.

Eight of the nine stanzas in
Brodsky's poem have Florence as
their setting, but behind it there are
hints of another scene. He notes a
"deserted goldfinch" caged in a
cage, and this recalls the bird with
whom Mandelstam identified in his
poem. The association is deepened
by a ray of light comes through
the goldfinch overflows in the
centre of a wire Ravenna.

In the final stanza Brodsky speaks
of "cities to which there is no
return", and the scene has shifted
to Leningrad:

There the crowd speaks, as it
beverages the corner of the tram,
in the language of the man who has
"gone away".
The final verb, *uyti*, is rich in con-
notation. It can mean to go off on
leave, on duty; or, of a casualty,
to be taken off the strength of a
unit. And the primary meaning of
the verb is to ebb or wane. Thus
the man in the poem has been dim-
inished by his going. As when
Ophelia looked back, Eurycleid
felt away, so the true self of the
poet, empowered by his full posses-
sion of the language, seems to
sink away at the poem's close.

We look back he must—the Muses
are the children of Mnemosyne,
and the Muse of "future" is from
the Russian language
the Russian language
we nibble away the sweet morsel
of memory like your cheese in
holes...

It becomes the natural movement
of his thought. One of the twelve
poems (they resemble stanzas)
constituting "A Part of Speech"
is: "Beyond today stands im-
possibly tomorrow, like a predicate
beyond the subject." But the mice
eat work in the next poem:

Baltic marches, beside
grey zinc waves, always running up
in pairs,
balance all the rhymes, hence this
was voice,
between them. Hair—wet
these level regions it saves
from falsehood

Rest On The Hunt

Riders cascade down the valley in the
wrong direction. Here the chase is over
and the dogs relax, chewing, wading
in the ditch, rolling on earth. The horses
twist their heads uncomfortably. They
are not at ease. The brush has been
detached, examined and is now hung
from the saddle. No-one looks at it.
The master seeks further game and waits
for pursuers to wheel his way. How sharp
is this air: the explosion into death
has left a tang. They savour it
and remain stock still, bitten by the acid
into a climax from which all movement would be decay.

the heart to have nowhere to hide,
and the long views...

As another poem says,
In a wooden town you sleep more
because you dream out of what
has been.
It smells of fresh fish, to the wall
the profile of a chair, the thin
stirs in the window; and the moon
adjusts with a ray the flood
like a slipping blanket.

And at once in the following poem
he turns to a Russian village amid
forests and marshes. Does he re-
member it?

Old woman Nastya likely is dead,
and Psterev alive scarcely,
but if alive, then drunk he sits in
else frames from the back of our
bed something,
they say a wicket, could be a gate.
And in winter there they chop wood
and a star blinks from smoke in
the frosty sky...

Those lines attest (in Marina
Tsvetayeva's phrase) the pliancy of
Russian speech. Whatever Brodsky
may fear, he is still marvelously
at home in the language. At the
same time, he is putting exile to
good use, by seeking out affinities
and extensions. An example of
comes in one of the Mexican
poems:

Evening México-City.
Indolence and blind force
in it mixed as in a vessel
and life flows like *tequila*.
Tequila is a Mexican word for a
kind of gin, but in Russian garb
as *tekila*, and following here the
verb *tekuch*, "flows". It joins the
family of words with their stem in
tek that denote fluency in various
forms, e.g. *tekuchika*, a dialect word
for "pitch". The process exempli-
fies what is said in the last of the
"Sonnets to Mary Stuart". "The
accidental appearing as inevitable/
brings gain to any work."

An accident of the cruellest kind
(and common enough in our cen-
tury) has thrown Brodsky into the
cosmopolitan world. The potential
loss, to him and to Russian poetry,
is plain enough. It may be true
as he says in "A Cape Cod
Lullaby", that
Loneliness teaches the essence of
things, for their essence is also
loneliness.

And from the beginning he has
accepted this as his condition, and
with it incompleteness. (It is only
in the darkness of a dream, as the
poem "Love" of 1971, closing the
first of these volumes, puts it, that
"there lasts what was broken off
in the light.") But simply because
separation exists, and loss of
familiar bearings have befallen so
many others, gain may still come
to his work. Even a poet secure
in his homeland, Montale, has
grown increasingly cosmopolitan in
his style. Inevitably, one assumes,
this must happen to Brodsky, sur-
rounded by American speech, and
keenly aware as he is of American
poetry. He is more fortunate, how-
ever, than his American contem-
poraries. The Russian language that
has so recently answered the needs
of his thought, Mandelstam, Man-
delstam and Akmatova must be a
source of undying strength to a
modern poet, even away from Rus-
sian soil and Russian voices. He has
not been left with "shabby equip-
ment always deteriorating" even in
this "second-rate epoch". One may
hope that the Russian language has
momentum enough to carry it
through the barren decades until a
divided culture is brought together
again. Meanwhile, by an irony
characteristic of our time, it could
be that the best poetry from
America in recent years is the work
of this Russian.

Here be monsters

By Richard Usborne

GRAHAM J. McEWAN:
Sea Serpents, Sailors and Scorpions
133pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£4.50.

In the blurb for a forthcoming book
I read "... Paul du Chailly, whose
claim in 1861 to be the first man
to have seen and shot a gorilla set
the world agog. He was fished in
America and given a standing ovation
by the Royal Geographical
Society, though discrepancies in his
story later damaged his case..."

It is rather painful today to read
that "and shot" and to know how
glorious an achievement it was.
Chailly's was thought then. But
were not those gorillas that Hanno
the Carthaginian, writing in Punic,
about 500 BC, described? My Punic
is rusty these days, but in the Greek
translation, I read, admittedly, a
doubtful (though well pre-du
Chailly) date and authenticity,
Hanno and his expedition travelled
west and south round the coast of
Africa as far as Fernando Poo near
Lagos.

On that island, or on one that
somewhere in the Atlantic, and on
an island in that lake (I quote
from the 1797 translation by Thomas
Falconer, Fellow of Corpus
Christi, Oxford) "full of favage
people, the greater part of which
were women, who had been
captured and sold as slaves to
called Gorilla. Though we purified
the men, we could not faze any
of them; but all fled from us
escaping over the precipices, and
defending themselves with stones.
Five women were however taken;
but they attacked their conductors
with their teeth and hands, and
could not be prevailed on to accom-
pany us. Having killed them, we
flayed them, and brought their
skins with us to Carthage. We did
not fail farther on, our provisions
failing us." According to Piny the
skins (of what he called Gorgons)
were put in the Temple of Juno in
Carthage and were there when the
Romans sacked the city and
destroyed it.

Then there is the old story in
Osbert Sitwell's preface to the book
Sea Truth compiled by Margaret
Barton and himself in 1930. During
Marlborough's campaign against the
French, a large ape, the first of its
kind introduced into England,
escaped and turned up in a remote
village. It was caught and ques-
tioned in court martial. Its jabber-
ings and gibberings were taken to
be French, and it was hanged as a
spy.

Travellers' tales about strange
lives things (e.g. men whose heads
do grow beneath their shoulders)
are thrice blessed. They enthral
in telling, they enthral again in
proof, and are generally
good reading if and when they are
shown to be a lot of rubbish. This
book is good reading in the first
category. The second and third
categories may remain hypothetical
in our lifetime, though I do think
Cousins ought to attempt a defini-
tive search of Loch Ness soon.

From Homer, Hanno, Aristotle
and Piny to the present day (sea
serpents, krakens, monstrous snow-
men and all fictional kingkongery)
it has all been good stuff. Ballo, in
his *Modern Traveller*, wrote
he was noted in my diary.
I have it here—the usual things—
A serpent (not the sort with wings)
Came zipping from the sea!
In length (as far as was could guess)
A quarter of a mile or less.
The weather was extremely clear,
The creature dangerously near
And plain as it could be.
It had a bifurcated tail.
And in its mouth it held a whale.
Just north, I find, of Cape Verd
Verd caught a very curious bird
With horns upon its head;
And—not, as one might well sup-
pose,
Web-footed or with jointed toes—
But having horns instead.

As no one present seemed to know
its use or name, I let it go.
In reading Graham McEwan's
findings in *Sea Serpents, Sailors and
Scorpions* one is almost as worried by
the causal way witnesses of strange
sea creatures did not follow them up
as by sea-creatures reports of having
seen to shoot them. But it is
interesting to know that Ballo's "in
its mouth it held a whale" may
have been suggested to him by the
report of Captain Dreyer and the
crew of the barque *Failline*, in 1875,

of a titanic fight between a sperm
whale and "what seemed to be a
huge sea-serpent" about twenty
miles off the coast of the east
shoulder of North America:
"It was a monstrous sea serpent
colled twice round a large sperm
whale. The head and tail parts,
each about thirty feet long, were
acting as levers, twisting itself
and victim round with great vel-
ocity... the sea... like a boiling
cauldron; and a loud and
confused noise was distinctly
heard..."

So the whale was dispatched and
dragged down head foremost to the
bottom, to be gorged on at leisure.
Captain Dreyer reckoned the ser-
pent to have been about 160 or
170 feet long. And five days later
he saw "the same or a similar
monster", with its head and about
forty feet of its body lifted horizon-
tally clear of the water.

Then there is the report of the
sailor above the swamps of
Florida: "Maybe I'm crazy, but
but that damned thing looked like
a giant penguin to me", and the
report of the U-boat commander
Freiherr von Forster in 1915. He
had just sunk the British steamer
Thorfin in the North Sea. About
twenty-five seconds after Thorfin
had disappeared there was a violent
undersea explosion. "A little later
pieces of wreckage, and among them
a gigantic seal animal, writhing and
struggling wildly, were shot out of
the water to a height of 60 to 100
feet."

Since unidentified flying objects
are now termed by the acronymic
colloquial "ufo", I would like to float
a longer, but equally useful,
word towards the dictionaries:
"uforman" (unidentified rather
frightening outside moving aquatic
object) or (adding "probably
alive") make it "uformaps". Mr
McEwan can have it without
acknowledgment.

He left school at sixteen and has
been a dental technician and assist-
ant cinema manager. He is an
amateur, not a trained scientist.
Which suits me because I am easily
blinded by science.

What Mr McEwan has done is book.

briefly to describe, discuss and
where possible, illustrate, chrono-
logically, about forty of the, to him,
most interesting recorded sightings
of uforman worldwide in the past
three centuries; and then, as a
long appendix, he has listed a total
of more than 400 sightings recorded
by what he reckons to have been
responsible and sincere witnesses:
from Data: 1658? Location: Nor-
wegian coast. Witness: Birgimster
of Malmö, Probable Type: Scandina-
vian Giant Otter", to "Date:
November 17, 1976, Location: Mouth
of the Holford River, Cornwall, Wit-
ness: David Clarke and Tony Doc-
Sueh, Probable Type: Long-necked
Seal". The weight of numbers of
sightings recorded, plus the eight
or nine disparate probable types of
uformans in all, especially the
warmer, oceans of the world, is so
impressive. And, to revert to
"respectable and sincere", let it be
said that, of the more than 400
sightings, nine were reported by
clergyman, one by a bishop. Sir
Arthur Conan Doyle and his wife
saw a long-necked seal-type uforman
in 1928 between Greece and Crete
and a judge reported seeing some-
thing that may have been a water-
horse (with mane) off Vancouver
Island in 1950.

So many sightings and so many
of them by people one would con-
fidently go to witness one's passport
pictures... I was a sceptic before
reading this book. I am now warn-
ing towards saying "Lord I believe
..." And, if it is of any interest
to Mr McEwan, let me tell him that
I saw a long-necked seal-type uforman
in 1928 between Greece and Crete
and a judge reported seeing some-
thing that may have been a water-
horse (with mane) off Vancouver
Island in 1950.

But, damn it, I was there and so
were the Rev maths master and the
loping cat-faced animal, which had
been found in a field outside
Oxford.

This is a most engaging little

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Growing old together

By Richard Mayne

SIMONE SIGNORET:
Nostalgia Isn't What It Used To Be
411pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £6.95.

You may remember her most vividly in Jacques Becker's 1952 film *Casque d'or*—the dazzling sensual "Golden Marie" from the demimonde of Paris at the turn of the century. Her partner there was Serge Reggiani, in those days young, pouting, looking rather puppyish. One felt his amazing luck in winning so grand a prize. In the mood of those days, it was a film noir: but the idyll was what one remembered. Curiously, his beauty was more than visual. Simone Signoret was a very physical presence; she breathed scented warmth. Yet, even then, she had a stately air. There was something stiff in her gait, a sharp contrast with the daring port, Audrey Hepburn guine fashion of the period. On the screen, Simone Signoret was always a woman, not a girl.

After the Becker film, she seemed typecast for a while as the golden-hearted woman in the classic thriller *Les Diaboliques* (1955) which touched deeper wickedness than graduated most notably to the adulterous Older Woman, Alice Aigle, in Jack Clayton's 1958 film of the same name. *Casque d'or* had earned her British Film Academy Award, but few laurels in France: *Room at the Top* gained her an Oscar. A further landmark in her personal development was Jean-Pierre Melville's *L'Armée des ombres* (1969), in which she played a sturdy resistance leader; then in the following year came *L'Aveu*, the Costa Gavras film about the victimized Czech Minister Arthur London, forced to confess to a rigged state trial. By now, Simone Signoret was nearly fifty; and it was a shock to see her playing a *Hausfrau*. She had aged—with us.

Her autobiography traces that development with humour, stoicism, and skill. Its starting-point was a series of taped interviews with Maurice Pons, which she discarded: only scraps of them re-appear at the end of the book, and what is out in France against an allegation that the book was ghosted. Even in translation, it reads as her own work—on defiant, sometimes slightly caustic, always brisk and always wholly characteristic of her milieu and her time. The milieu is not only the film world, or the music-hall in which her husband Yves Montand first made his name: it is also embraces much of Paris's left-wing intelligentsia and, through her own family, some complicated root-systems stretching over central Europe.

"I once met her father, Jean Kaminker. He was famous, not on account of his daughter, but as a star of the old school of international interpreters. Like so many of his generation, he was not primarily a glibly linguist: he had picked up his limited skill from his origins and his travels. His father and mother had been Jewish—his father a Polish diamond merchant, his mother Austrian; he himself had been born in France. Trained as a lawyer, he had worked in advertising; only later did he move into interpretation, with the United Nations and elsewhere. An imposing, fluent man, he could sit through a speech in any German without making a note, and speak up and make the same speech in English as if he himself were the orator. He figures little, and rather shyly, in Simone's book: but his actions, talents and purity in part his. Through her father, Simone Signoret had cousins in Eastern Europe, one of whom vainly tried to reach her on a consular route. Her account of the missed rendezvous, and its tragic consequences is one of the most moving parts of the book.

Also moving—or perhaps more accurately touching—is her account of her childhood, poised between the middle-class and the *haute bourgeoisie*. For a long time, she was an only child; her father was

increasingly absent; her younger brother died in 1933. Her mother was very protective. One of the first and best stories in the book describes an expedition at night, during a seaside holiday, to put back into the sea three shirts and a crab caught earlier that day and left in a pool of seawater. Simone Signoret told the story to Suzanne Flon, and still gets postcards from parts of call throughout the world saying: "My great-great-grandfather owes her life to you. Signed, A grateful Shrimp."

"My stories," she writes later, "are neither more nor less original, comic or emotional than any actress's stories in any country in the world." One, very typical, tells how she deliberately failed to board the train that was to take her away from Yves Montand to make *Casque d'or* in Paris—then caught it two days later after Jacques Becker had telephoned his deep understanding of her *grand amour*, but added that he had two other actresses in mind. She has some interesting tales about early, rather corny acting lessons—"One should never say, 'I hate you', one should say, 'I hate you', about the terrors of filming, after the habits of the theatre and in the habit of the publicity which Melville prompted her for her death scene, killed by her friends, in *L'Armée des ombres*. She describes how she first saw from innumerable films; how she came on a pepper-pot bust of John F. Kennedy, the holes representing the Dallas bullet-wounds; how Marshal Tito advised any revolutionary to arrive on the Paris train with a dog to distract the security men's attention. She tells a good tale.

Part of it, as the Tito story may suggest, is the tale of progressive disillusionment with the crypto-communist orthodoxies of the Left. She and Montand were never, she says, communists; and although they joined in many public protests, they finally quarrelled with Louis Aragon, while Montand, in Moscow, launched a scathing attack on literary yes-men, despite the famous backstage dinner which he and Simone Signoret had with the Soviet political leaders. Even so, Costa-Gavras's *L'Aveu* was not in retrospect, perhaps, so vast a political step.

A whiff of jungle air

By Gabriele Annan

JOSEPHINE BAKER and JO HOUILLON:
Josephine
Translated by Marianna Fitzpatrick
302pp. W. H. Allen. £6.95.

Josephine Baker, the Ebony Venus, died in 1975. Her co-author, Jo Houillon, is her widow, a French dance-band leader from whom she was separated at the time of her death; but not divorced, because she still felt responsible for their twelve adopted children. Fifteen years earlier she had begun to make notes for an autobiography; the book is based partly on these, but large portions of the story are told by Jo and others: by her sister, by impresarios, producers, dancing partners, servants, and some of the children. They all speak with the same vibrant enthusiasm, with fervour and frenetic speed, matching the tempo of her life, which was fast, and fast until she dropped dead after her last dance comeback. By the last page of *Josephine* you may feel ready to drop dead too.

Yet inside this showbiz biography of a blondest superstar there is a case history as good as Bessie Smith's. Josephine Baker was not born in a trunk, but the age of twelve she hid in one in order to remain with the Dixie Stoppers, a black road-show which had taken her, as a dresser on its way through St. Louis and wanted to leave her eldest, half-caste child of a black family so poor that her mother sent the children to work in the garbage cans for chicken heads to make into soup. They were noisily

Miller figures more intimately later, when he and Montand were thrust into Hollywood proximity with Montand and Simone Signoret. Many people, including Norman Mailer, have read into that quadrilateral relationship some scabrous and damaging imputations. It seems likely that Marilyn and Montand grew close, from hints dropped by Simone Signoret, one might conclude more; but on her relationship with her husband, and on his with other women, she remains understandably discreet. No one should read her book for scandal. The nearest she comes to that type of frankness is in her account of the baby that she and her first husband Yves Allégret had before they were married—a baby who now has a son of her own.

The "we" which Simone Signoret uses to announce opinions or conclusions on her own and Yves Montand's behalf is sometimes a little cloying; it recalls the American matron, spokeswoman for a pendant breadwinner. In one place, it sounds ludicrous: "In Sofia we saw a people that was strong, calm and gay." Even the interviewer questions her use of "we". Well, as she admits, "We're just the same age, Montand and I. He's lived beside me while I aged, and I've lived beside him while he matured. That's one of the differences between men and women." Age grows through the book like a rolling bass.

After forty—come on, let's say forty-five—you can take one of two routes: either you can elope to parts that keep you looking thirty-five or thirty-six as long as possible, or you can be like everybody else, and quietly accept the idea that forty-five puts you on the road to forty-six rather than forty-four.

It's very hard to remain a star.... It's very easy to go on functioning at the same rhythm as your contemporaries; to mature together with them, and to age with them.

And it's miraculous when life brings you parts that seem to grow better each year; stronger, laden with the memories and personal experiences that have put those parts on your face.

That is the wise, resigned, matter-of-fact voice of Simone Signoret. The anonymous American translator has done his best: he

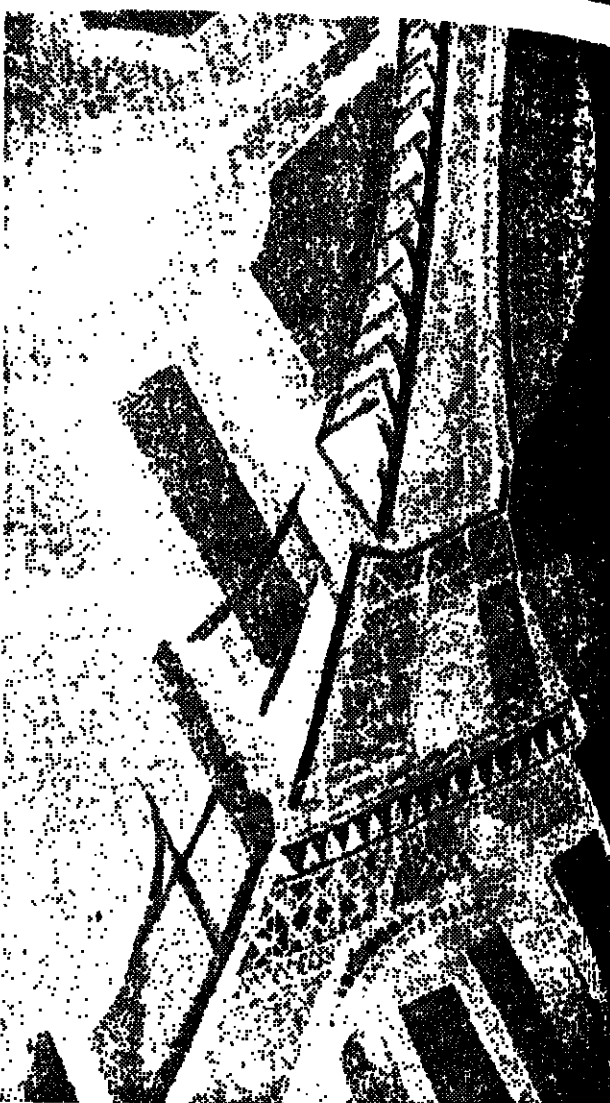
slips badly now and then, with a few "false friends" like "deception" and "pretend" for "disappointment" and "claim"—plus the statement that "Olin Abbot was France's wartime ambassador to Germany instead of the other way round. But through this grainy version there still shines out a genuine, mature person; all passion not yet spent,

married a young Jewish business-man, converted to Judaism, and remained in that faith although the marriage was very soon over. Her feelings about race and religion were intense, but simplistic. She believed that all religions were equally good, and brought up each of her children in the faith of its natural parents: Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist, fetish-worshiping or whatever; the Jewish boy went to a Jewish school, and was finished. As for men, she was against it: her dream was interbreeding "until racial purity disappears. But I'd like to see that happen through love, not hate". In the 1960s she campaigned in the United States for human rights, but she was in support of Black Power, a "new kind of hatred and racism".

During the war years, improbable though it may seem, Josephine worked for the French Resistance movement, smuggling messages in invisible ink into Portugal on her sheet-music. When the Free French landed in North Africa she became a lieutenant in the French equivalent of ENSA (she was buried in her uniform) and was decorated by de Gaulle. But as soon as the war was over she got down to travelling her dream of fighting racism by example, with a family of four orphans, all different colours. She needed a base, and found Les Milandes, a ruined chateau in the Dordogne. She needed a husband and money in vast quantities, and that health had been undermined by a series of scarring infections and operations, and her looks were not what they had been. She threw her self into a whirl of come-back tours, leaping from several neuro-debilities straight back on to the stage.

Some of the come-backs were flops; but by this time she seems to have gone slightly crazy in her determination to do what she had

solid achievements legitimated, a worn but still in honourable, a worn but still in relationship making sense of otherwise lonely pilgrimages. Simone Signoret's last years, as she said, "Nostalgia isn't what it used to be" was a New York clearly doesn't describe this but Simone Signoret says, "I don't have any nostalgia. What I don't have is nostalgia. That sounds like further after all.



The Eiffel Tower, by Robert Delaunay, a version dating from 1924-6. It is among the exhibits in Paintings from Paris, an Arts Council exhibition at present at Oxford and about to move to Norwich (and, later this year, to Manchester and Coventry).

FICTION

Where the action is

By Valentine Cunningham

REGIS DEBRAY:
Undesirable Alien
235pp. Allen Lane. £4.25.

English literature in our century has not taken kindly, let alone naturally, to the man of action. Ever since our First World War poets turned in their anti-heroic notes our typical native author has been Auden: neurotically self-obsessive, forever anxious about what lies outlandish, edging the occasional out from the Grotto side and into the lukewarm Marxist pool but pulling it promptly back before shuffling off to the safety of closet and cloister. Unlike braggadocio-bound Eisenhower, Auden was not pretended, not even in their journey to a War, to be standing in Auden Man's shoes: he went gingerly be-carpet-slipped the whole way. He might profess to admire Lenin, but it was T. E. Lawrence he really fancied. And T. E. Lawrence was, as Christopher Caudwell knew, the bourgeois heromane, the man of letters broken by the effort to make the heroic grade as man of action. But how differently they have been able to manage these things, elsewhere in the packed comic the roses of other people's heroic authors: Lenin and Trotsky, Hemingway, André Malraux and, of course, Régis Debray.

Given its generic un-Englishness *Undesirable Alien*, Debray's first attempt at a novel, would need to be very bad indeed (worse than Malraux's *La Condition Humaine* and *L'Espoir*, for instance, which have always seemed to me to be a hard slog for their readers) not to stir any interest here. As it is, this fiction possesses far more than its minor author's reputation.

John Hersey once served as secretary to Sinclair Lewis. The Frenchman tells, in his sense of place (New Haven, Connecticut), his eye for detail and ear for smart-ass backchat is absolute. He stalks his characters as his hero stalks, stalks, stalks, and ultimately bugs his girl. Both are craftsmen, intent on every premeditated move. Macabrey is at his workbench. He is making a flush door.

This is to be the Prince of Doors.

By Harold Beaver

JOHN HERSEY:
The Walnut Door
239pp. Macmillan. £4.95.

John Hersey once served as secretary to Sinclair Lewis. The Frenchman tells, in his sense of place (New Haven, Connecticut), his eye for detail and ear for smart-ass backchat is absolute. He stalks his characters as his hero stalks, stalks, stalks, and ultimately bugs his girl. Both are craftsmen, intent on every premeditated move. Macabrey is at his workbench. He is making a flush door.

This is to be the Prince of Doors.

Into community

By Anne Barnes

SERENA SUE HILSINGER:
Sell Life
201pp. Hamish Hamilton. £4.50.

The word "Community" echoes heavily through this description of an eccentric New England village. Two women are struggling to re-establish themselves after losing their husbands: one by death, the other by divorce. Lorena has nursed her husband through the painful stages of cancer and now finds herself alone in the house where they have spent all their married life. Surrounded by the possessions and neighbourhood contacts and waiting for a reason to connect with them again, into this stillness comes a little-known niece of her dead husband. Her character is carefully formulated to be Lorena's exact opposite. While Lorena has been sitting in one house, almost one room, for twenty years, Sarah has been brought up by a nomadic father to be always on the move, always packing and unpacking. "She has been to Tokyo and Iceland but never to Community." Now having been dumped and abandoned married to Lorena in an isolated cottage, she decides to move in on "community".

She starts by moving potatoes, then moves on to tomatoes, meal-making and tries to bustle up her aunt's drooping life. A true tourist, she is

and passionate slackness of a grotesquely yanked-off state in South America? Is it not a blunder to speculate on the "trying to use the works of Karl Marx to help one make revolution on the shores of the Orinoco"? The question is very seriously levelled, and not with any *God Who Failed* breast-beatings or sneerings at the efficacy or the vaticination of Marx and Marxism. Neither Frank nor the novel returns to a straight answer. Instead, the difficulties are let speak for themselves. There's the frighteningly invoked megalopolis monstrosity of the twentieth-century state—its garish architectural wastelands, its multi-laned highways—a gigantic garage that a handful of nineteenth-century believers is attempting to overthrow with the odd grenade, the smuggled carbine or two, the clandestinely printed pamphlet. And there is Frank's European taste for the cinema: by which no perception or vision comes plain, but always refracted through some filmic transmutation of real life. What price, it is implied, the would-be realist and revolutionary who keeps feeding himself as Humphrey Bogart or Goldfinger, or playing in Buñuel's *Los Olvidados*, or directing some Bill of his own political or erotic obsessions? Celis, Frank's casual Latin-American girlfriend, eager to get laid for the cause, thinks of the film much more sparsely as just good incendiary stuff.

Around Frank's frustrations with Celis focus the novel's readings in the more usual leftist disillusionments. Hereabouts come the regular kinds of charge: the Party's dirty machiavellianism, its heartless switches of policy that condemn brave guerrillas to death and leave Manuel, the anachronistic printer, to his tortures; the halting bureaucracy and terror of the Soviet Union; above all, the denial of life before and after the desired apocalypse. The revolutionary, Frank realizes, is invited to lose his life that others may save theirs; but what if the promised land were never to materialize? Celis's innumerable and truer help indict not just South American revolutionaries, but every sort.

Debray's political experience imparts a knowingsness to his ideological case and his Europeanism gives a formal artfulness to the story. On the face of it it is a helplessness of narrative devices—authorial sermons, first and third person narrations, addresses in Celis and letters from Frank, manuscript scraps by his friend Armando, the story of the guerrilla Diego and his last and first person turns out to be constantly and cleverly alerted to its own doings. An ironic discussion of Régis Debray ("Stalinist") and his works is only typical of the very self-reflexiveness. Narrating in both third and first person, Frank rocks, his own alienation. Putting events into fictive order is necessary to make sense of the otherwise disarming flux. And when Frank has thrown away his life in a bid for glory it is a surprise to learn that he is taking the manuscript of this novel in his bag.

Puzzled by the novel's opening lines, the Major sends the script away for decoding. It is an apt *nouveau roman* moment, underlining the character's important Europeanism of Marxian thought. And it leaves Marx, as it leaves this French writer's heroism, still to be decoded by a puzzled Latin American.

A pure door, an essence. First principle: *Plywood* doors. Second law: *Veneer* is Nixonian—all cover-up. The door is being joined from the pieces of aged two-inch walnut... heavy in the base sense, like the facial expression of Humphrey Bogart—tough, authentic, mysterious.

But the *Walnut Door* is lightweight and in no way misleading. It is as authentic as a ventriloquist's dummy, rehearsing the fate of student Fidelistas of the Chicago 1960s becalmed in the doldrums of the 1970s. The novel-based College of Arts and Sciences, the sexy blacksmith picks a forlorn, defenceless runaway. The only play for male expertise (whether locksmith or author, it seems) is woman as victim.

It is a comic yarn, though, breezy and poyntal as youth itself. For picking women, like locks, is a breathholding business. "Requires a lover's leg to get you the patient you can barely feel the pin tumbler tick into lodgment." Until locks click. With Macabrey, the con-man charmer, who can burgle his ladies as expertly as he can walk them in, locks always click. "Safe as a Security-Syst-1 is ambushed in gold on his back. Eddie is engraved like a pledge over his heart. His doors, designed to keep out a threatening world, admit only him. His captive awaits him with dazed submission. Unlike Macabrey's sweet prisoner, she neither cheats him nor is gone. She just surrenders. "Jesus, Macabrey, Jesus. I had twelve orgasms" to his crazy indignation.

Who is the Pledge? The locksmith retreating from communal living and microbus tours and political jamborees to his domination of a one decade to the amused recital of a collegiate seducer? Just as John Hersey scavenges the past for the decayed from the trendy clutter of the 1960s, so he betrays the serious shift among the young from political to personal perfection. Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance is a total engagement with perfection and self-perfection; machines were not potent of mind and will but bear some Trappist brothers "on the hill", a new comet which has to be elaborately charted, a girl in a park at Versailles who talks to an imaginary companion; they all keep cropping up in meaningful moves on to tumultuous meal-making and tries to bustle up her aunt's drooping life. A true tourist, she is

fascinated by the idiosyncrasies of life in a small town which Lorena takes for granted, and like all tourists she reacts by throwing herself into the most accessible local activities, which in this case are good works in the library and generic parties.

Neither of the two women has much individuality. But if they had been allowed clearer personalities they would not have balanced each other so well nor would they have decorated the landscape so neatly. Together they mark clear points on the graph of loss, but it is the landscape which matters and the very bereavement both "isolates" people from their environment and thrusts them upon it. The village is full of people working out the same problem. One old man thinks that the tree on the village green is his dead wife; another neighbour finds so much discord in her own attitude to her house that she takes to sleeping in her car. Around these lonely figures the seasons change, the buildings crack and professional sympathizers hover.

Although everything is carefully worked out to form a pattern with many twists and turns, the novel is still annoyingly simplistic. After a time some Trappist brothers "on the hill", a new comet which has to be elaborately charted, a girl in a park at Versailles who talks to an imaginary companion; they all keep cropping up in meaningful moves on to tumultuous meal-making and tries to bustle up her aunt's drooping life. A true tourist, she is

A prof among pros

By Eric Korn

HERBERT GOLD:
Waiting for Cordelia
234pp. Hutchinson. £4.95.

The best plots are the old ones, but the converse is not necessarily true. Herbert Gold is a considerable writer, not too often considered in Britain, but his latest number is a golden oldie: the one about the hooker and the poor fish—strumpet voluntary, with intellectual obligato.

It is set in melancholy-permissive San Francisco. The poor fish, the observer who reluctantly is drawn into the action but never far enough, is a failed psychopath, "tucked out by premature notoriety and Sixties relevance", now "a sociology professor, researching a thesis on prostitution as the victimless crime and worried about losing tenure." "Could they do that to a very popular lecturer who once robbed a bank as part of his sociological doling?" he wonders, self-admiringly. The hooker is Cordelia Celtic, actor-manager in an "artistic and cultural salon for those who ask Who am I?", with a patter of paradoxical wisdom recalling French movies of the 1930s set in foggy docklands. "I give them paid active hot juicy love so good it could pass for fake," she explains.

Just when she is setting intolerable she can come up with a felicitous and endearing vindication. Underneath his articulate uncertainty and jockey tartlessness (the words "sad" and "lonely" are more frequent than full stops) are more Hebrew than Kibernetik. He is also a scholarly, irascible Jewish boy, once incarcerated and fattened by the equation *shiksa*—harlot with which all nice Jewish boys were once indoctrinated. This perhaps accounts for the relative dearth of actual sex in the book. When he sighs "I left my tart in San Francisco", the strains of "My yiddishie momma" are heard off-stage.

Cordelia is no spring chicken. For one thing, she has a teenage

daughter, with whom of course she is tough and vulnerable, and for another, she's been around a long time. As soon as she opens her mouth to utter another later-sweet aphorism, all pragmatic sentimentality, you realize she must have served a stint at old Dora Flood's place in Cannery Row. Come to think of it, wasn't she in the back room of Madame Teller's?

Cordelia is assisted by girls like Rose Ann, with so much integrity she wouldn't want the contact lenses her parents gave her as a going-to-college present, and opposed by Marietta Kirwin, running for Mayor on the progressive decency ticket. "If only people would learn that our community standards in this lovely city and county of San Francisco are just as high as those elsewhere, we could have a renaissance comparable to none." When the misogynists meet, they discover sisterhood under their skins: "Some say, Cordelia, your profession and mine are similar," Cordelia, mournful sexual idealist, caresses her hooker's Union and goes bravely off to court arrest. The narrator is left on the sidelines where he started, having failed Cordelia in her moment of need by refusing to seduce her daughter.

The style veers between Bay Area Baroque and Playboy Pretentious. The action is episodic and structure there is none. The story is intermittent, intelligent and entertaining. One problem is the subtext. Though the narrator, Cordelia's inert idolator, is resolutely called "Albert Dooley", his articulate uncertainty and jockey tartlessness (the words "sad" and "lonely" are more frequent than full stops) are more Hebrew than Kibernetik. He is also a scholarly, irascible Jewish boy, once incarcerated and fattened by the equation *shiksa*—harlot with which all nice Jewish boys were once indoctrinated. This perhaps accounts for the relative dearth of actual sex in the book. When he sighs "I left my tart in San Francisco", the strains of "My yiddishie momma" are heard off-stage.

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GRANADA PUBLISHING

Prague's non-periodical

More than five hundred years after Gutenberg, there exists—not in some forsaken corner of a remote continent, but in the very heart of Europe—a sizeable group of people to whom the benefits of the invention of printing are denied. While in the west the sensibility of the reader to the printed word may be in danger of being drowned in a deluge of new titles released by the publishing industry, in Czechoslovakia the word writer has reverted to its medieval meaning: writing books has again become synonymous with producing them, only a run-down typewriter has replaced the quill.

Not only books are being produced in this manner. *Index on Censorship* has published a facsimile of an unofficial cultural magazine which first appeared in Prague at the end of last year. The magazine, called *Spektrum*, is typed lengthways on about 150 sheets of size A4 paper and features philosophical and historical essays, articles, short stories, reviews and poems by authors whose work has been banned from appearing in print, as well as a few translated contributions, among them a short story by Kurt Vonnegut and an interview with Edward Goldsmith. A second issue of the "non-periodical" as the unknown, but highly professional Czech editors called it, is to be reprinted at a later date. Copies of the first issue can be obtained from 21 Russell Street, London WC2. £4.50 plus 50p postage.)

In a way the magazine takes up the traditions of the Czechoslovak cultural press which in the 1960s conducted, still under the watchful eye of censorship, an exercise in social and political self-examination that ultimately prepared the ground for the reform movement of 1968, a tradition interrupted when virtually all these journals and magazines were closed down a few months after the Czechoslovak reform had been crushed by the forces of the Warsaw Pact.

There is, however, an important difference. While in the past it was impossible to transgress the limits of the official Marxist ideology in print, these restrictions do not affect the authors of *Spektrum*. As they write unofficially and ostensibly only to exchange ideas with

a close circle of friends, the scope of their reflection has become much wider: neo-Marxist views now appear side-by-side with a religious interpretation of the problems of the contemporary world, something that would have been unthinkable in the past.

The quality of the writing is impressive. These writers who work and live in the most adverse circumstances imaginable, always facing the risk of being prosecuted for having put their ideas on paper, can be envied for the seriousness with which they approach literature. Self-expression has become for them a means of personal survival, but in their writing they also provide a means of human spirit in a country which has been deprived of any significant public life.

This does not apply only to the new magazine, which has given cultural dissent in Czechoslovakia a collective voice. Over the past two years, dozens of Czech writers, who had refused to bow to the political demands of the authorities and whose names have been officially expurgated from their country's literature, have retained their place in it by the circulation of worn-out typewritten copies of their new work. Over 100 titles have been made available in this way by the well known "black edition" alone. A good many of them have been published abroad, providing the authors with the satisfaction of seeing their work in print (albeit in translation). Even more important may be the fact that some thus achieved a degree of security—albeit a precarious one—against the continuous harassment of people like Václav Havel or the recent arrest of Jiří Grusa for his novel *The Questionnaire* would suggest that the authorities in Czechoslovakia are very receptive towards world opinion.

Such repressive measures may be aimed not only at preventing the dissemination of people like Václav Havel, but ultimately at closing another important outlet which the banned Czech writers have found since the early 1970s, when they came into existence, Czech publishing houses in Germany, Canada and other western countries have issued over 300 new titles. While most of these are the work of writers now living in exile, there is among them an increasing number of outstanding new

books originating in Czechoslovakia. They are being published with the permission of the authorities, who are well aware of the risk this can involve.

With literary activity being spread over several centres, at least three distinct streams are recognizable in contemporary Czech writing. Official literature has produced little of genuine interest beside boasts of statistics of the numbers of books published. There are more than not they are sterile variations on old themes of socialist realism by old hands, while the handful of younger writers who show any talent have either not managed or may have been unwilling to extend their voices beyond a private world of intimate emotion.

Of the many works produced in exile, most interesting have been those in which authors like Jaroslav Vejvoda or Josef Skvorecky have tried to match their past experience with an investigation of the new circumstances in which they find themselves.

But the most valuable contribution is still that of the banned and harassed Czech writers at home, who continue to explore an authoritarian system from within and succeed in creating, to use the words of Herbert Marcuse, an "image of human existence and of nature no longer confined within the norms of the repressive reality principle but really surviving their fulfilment and gratification, even at the price of death and catastrophe".

Igor Hajek

Directorial dodges

The art that conceals art is mercifully revealed in Jeff Rovin's *Movie Special Effects* (171pp, Tantivy Press, £7.95). Split-screen, rear-screen, miniature-screen; slow-motion, stop-motion, double exposure, the whole bag of tricks is lovingly explicated before our disenchanted eyes. We learn how to make snow (gypsum, salt and cornflakes) and clouds of locusts (coffee grounds photographed upside down); how to develop unsightly facial hair; how to fall through plate glass windows; how to catch fire without being burned. There are magic, monsters and make-up artists, too. Cinemascope, Super-Panavision and Dynamation, a brief (too brief) running commentary on the race between Smell-O-Vision and Aroma-Rama (Aroma-Rama, by a nostril).

It is not an eventful history, first most of today's dodges were first used in the cinema. Of which Rovin gives a potted and perceptive history, mis-spelling the first names of Daguerre and Niepce and omitting Friese-Greene; Edison made ghosts and circus animals perform; Melies in his early movies like *A Trip to the Moon* and *Off with the Head* used double exposure and split-screen metaphors. But there are later landmarks: the first on-screen man-to-beat-transformation, "the first major film-maker to use a rubber mask controlled by wires from above" — this was De Mille in *Four Frightening People* (1934), but De Mille, who was impatient of machine imagery, only travelled in the wake of the "realizers" — later turned to realism and insisted on an authentic as for the eyeball-on-eyeball confrontation with Cleopatra's bosom (played by Claudette Colbert). In *Noah's Ark*, allegedly Browning's real drawings, too. Tod Browning's real drawings, too. Tod Browning's real drawings, too.

There are always the pictures, such as those of the man-to-beat-transformation, "the first major film-maker to use a rubber mask controlled by wires from above" — this was De Mille in *Four Frightening People* (1934), but De Mille, who was impatient of machine imagery, only travelled in the wake of the "realizers" — later turned to realism and insisted on an authentic as for the eyeball-on-eyeball confrontation with Cleopatra's bosom (played by Claudette Colbert). In *Noah's Ark*, allegedly Browning's real drawings, too. Tod Browning's real drawings, too. Tod Browning's real drawings, too.

Rovin faithfully renders judg-



The Cambridge bookeller Gene Devitt (1860-1936): a drawing by Sir William Nicholson, who illustrated a book of tributes published in 1937. It is reproduced by Roy Harley. *Inside a Bookshop* (200pp, Newton Abbott: Dent and Charles, £4.95). David anti- and Cambridge with five points in cash and books and shop a bookshop for forty years, from a market stall and then a shop beside St Edward's Church in 1925 he was honoured by lunch at Trinity College in recognition of the conspicuous services he has rendered to the cause of humane letters.

POLITICS

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN: Reflections on Political Violence

23pp, Hutchinson, £6.50.

The attention we give to terrorism often seems disproportionate to its real importance. Terrorist incidents make superb copy for journalists, but kill and maim fewer people than road accidents. Nor is terrorism politically effective. Empires rise and fall according to the real determinants of politics—namely, overwhelming force or strong popular support—not according to a handful of madmen who would take seriously enough to vote for. Indeed, the very variety of incidents that might be described as "terrorism" has been such as to lead critics to suggest that no single subject for investigation exists at all. Might we regard terrorism as a kind of minor blotch on the skin of an industrial civilization whose very heart is filled with violent dreams and aspirations? Who would call in the dermatologist when the heart is sick?

But popular opinion takes terrorism very seriously indeed, and popular opinion is probably right. For the significance of terrorism is not only in the grotesque nastiness of terrorist outrages but also in the moral claims they imply. Terrorism is the most dramatic exploitation of the moral fault of blind willfulness, and it is of blind willfulness that the Hobbesian state of nature is composed. Terrorism is a sophisticated denial of the obligation of self-control we all must recognize when we live in communities. "My mouth shall be the parliament of England," cried the proto-terrorist Jack Cade. My gun shall legislate for Ireland, wrote the IRA. It is this moral dimension as much as its outrageousness which gives terrorism its claim on our attention, and any treatment of the subject which ignores this dimension can lead only to misunderstanding.

Certainly the sovereign high ground of understanding terrorism is the pseudo-scientific project of attempting to discover its causes. Terrorists themselves talk of the motivations which have supposedly inspired their actions, but to understand these facile justifications in scientific hypotheses is to condemn to the terrorist's own madness. When a recent writer in the *Times* remarks: "Realizing the original cause of the difficulties of a deficient economy—the army has great pains to stimulate investment and diversification, but he is at best elliptically suggesting that economic discontent motivates terrorism a bit more than a few personalities," it is this remark made any sense at all. A causal analysis, we should say West Germany to be totally misled by terrorists. To kill innocent people is a choice people make, and gib invocations of neces-

sity are baseless. Other people living in the same situation see no such necessity at all. Hence there are no "causes" of terrorism; only decisions to terrorize. It is a moral phenomenon and only a moral discussion can be adequate to it.

For this reason, Conor Cruise O'Brien's *Reflections on Political Violence* is a welcome addition to the literature by a man of notable versatility. Ever since, in the early 1960s, he carried out the United Nations policy of forcibly keeping together the centrifugal fragments of the newly independent Congo, Zaire, where new backers have been found for a revival of the drama of Katanga secession) O'Brien has been conspicuous as that rare bird, the actor-contemplator. Not for him the memoirs and comment appear almost together, and cross-fertilize each other. In New York in the late 1960s he became deeply involved in the debate over the Vietnam War, and he now takes a liberal's pleasure in recording that he was attacked from both sides. Returning to his native Ireland, he became a Cabinet Minister in the last government, but was soon getting himself into hot water (apparently his native habits) by condemning the IRA, an act which took courage and integrity and which certainly did not help his political career.

The central preoccupation of O'Brien's thought seems to be with the corruption of power. In the earlier stages of his career, it was largely the corruption of the historical order which concerned him: with the British ("England" as he usually calls them) in relation to Ireland, with the Americans in relation to the Third World, and (a long way behind) with the Russians. The world seemed then to be divided into "glosters" who introduced corruption and "brooders" who hatched their bitterness within the frustrations of their bosom. The British and the Irish were the archetypes of glosters and brooders. Now, however, it is the corruption of terrorism which has come increasingly to preoccupy him. *Reflections on Political Violence* is not, as the Sorelian echo of its title and its author's past might suggest, an argument asserting the necessity of the purity of terror, but a series of short pieces on terrorism in general and Irish violence in particular. It ends with three short plays which are in fact dramatized political arguments. The first, by the figure of Herod the Great, celebrates the story as the man who massacred the innocents, and therefore an appropriate image for political cynicism and knowledgeability.

To be a politician is, as O'Brien sees it, to suffer from a kind of primal curse. Give me the names of the rulers of the world, and I will give you a list of the names of the rulers of the world. Give me the names of the rulers of the world, and I will give you a list of the names of the rulers of the world.

Michael Collins, Winston Churchill and Lyndon Johnson; to which list

August 24th

BLIGH

by Gavin Kennedy

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It is quite true that violence is institutionalized in all forms of organized society. It is also true that, since all forms of organized society that we know—be it a nation, a city, a corporation, a school, a family—contain great inequalities of power, wealth and status, and since these inequalities are in the last resort defended by violence, anyone who lives in such a society, and accepts its rules, is committing some degree of oppressive violence.

Now expressions like "in the last resort" are wretched words which pretend to a certainty they cannot sustain. It is in fact true that inequalities are unnatural and can only be sustained by great force. It is no less plausible to think that most inequalities are unnatural and require great force to sustain them. It is certainly true that regimes officially dedicated to equality have

Herod replies, in the accents of his animosity: "Every one of them shed blood, as I did, for reasons of state. For the preservation of the state, which is essential to ordered human life. And to the very existence of such an audience as yourselves."

This is Machiavelli's paradox that orderly, civil, moral life depends upon the art of politics in which morality in the ordinary sense may have to be cast aside; and O'Brien earlier devoted a book called *The Suspecting Chance* to interpreting Machiavelli as a man who gave "moral comfort, permission, even abolition" to the perpetrators of the terrible wickedness. In one of the essays in the present book, O'Brien discusses cases in which an American intensification of the bombing of North Vietnam is designed purely to produce an effect on the opinion of some political group in the United States. In such cases, Vietnam becomes helpless victims of reason of state. Similarly, when the IRA wishes to communicate its seriousness about some policy, it does so by killing a few people. The terrible O'Brien would have associated such corrupt reasons of state only with this "glosters"; now he is aware that glosters and brooders alike are caught up in the problem.

The morality of politics is a real and complicated problem. But is it the problem raised by the thing called terrorism which is the central to most of the essays in this book? What O'Brien consistently does is to transpose the question of terrorism into the more general question of violence. O'Brien's introduction, summarizing the themes of the essays, seeks to perform an operation he calls "distilling the legitimization-structures" of violence, a piece of jargon presumably surviving from his earlier American period. Why legitimization, one wonders, rather than the more normal term "justification"? It is not actually concerned with the activity of making something lawful. Perhaps the appropriateness of the word is a concealed O'Brien's recognition that after all, what one does to bastards. The more serious difficulty of his discussion is the underlying suggestion that people act violently on the basis of adherence to some principle, and that one can dislodge the principle, one might contribute to the lessening of the violence. No doubt it is a noble aspiration, but it falls between the two schools of theoretical agency on the one hand and practical effectiveness on the other.

In generalizing the problem of terrorism to the level of violence in all human life, O'Brien finds himself embarrassed by the thought that all states are sustained by force of one kind or another, and this very argument is used by the terrorist to justify his actions. But they can dislodge the principle, one might contribute to the lessening of the violence. No doubt it is a noble aspiration, but it falls between the two schools of theoretical agency on the one hand and practical effectiveness on the other.

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O'Brien's embarrassment on this point is, however, unnecessary. We need not doubt that a hot-headed man, a rapacious man, a man who is not a terrorist, because what is named by that word is the use of

terror by small groups seeking to subvert a regime, and having recourse to terror because they lack the only two elements on which political effectiveness actually depends: either irresistible force, or popular support, preferably both. Terrorism manna a specific form of public violence, and any adequate understanding of it requires that it should be carefully distinguished from such other recurrences of the rulers (which features in the traditional literature as tyrannicide), raising the standard of revolt (as in such cases as Henry Tudor, Francisco Franco and Fidel Castro) even guerrilla warfare. Different considerations arise in each of these classes of violence, and they need to be distinguished even though actual cases will be confusing and arguable.

What is certainly important is to be clear that governments cannot be called "terrorists" because all governments must dispose of force (indeed states are often defined as monopolists of it) and will often find it necessary to use or threaten to use it in performing their duties. The question we need not distinguish between the wisdom of using force, and the title to use force.

The terrorist is another matter altogether. He is someone who feels so strongly about something that he feels he must resort to violence to be "effective" like the rather eccentric youth recently sentenced to life imprisonment in Croydon for trying to burn down a family planning clinic because he so strongly disapproved of abortion. Terrorists are people whose only warrant for taking the law into their own hands is the strength of their own passions, their conviction of their own righteousness; and they are particularly terrifying partly (as O'Brien recognizes) because there is often no way in which they could be satisfied, and partly because no one knows what lunatic ideas will come into their heads next. Their pattern these days is usually revolutionary, but they come from all over the place, both from what in the confused terminology of modern politics is called "the left" and also from "the right".

The paradox of their situation is that they are entirely helpless against sufficiently ruthless regimes, and can only prosper to any degree against precisely the sort of state where their justification for action is at its weakest. And they are twice cursed, not only for the beating of their chests, but also for the vast increase in repressive techniques and justifications which they allow to the governments they attack. The counter-terrorist techniques for controlling populations developed in Europe by Interpol will long survive the time when the Baader-Meinhof gang and the Red Brigades are merely footnotes in the history books.

Oh, all these questions O'Brien drops on the side of the agenda, but he is not a man any angel would want to go tiger-shooting with. There are variations of emphasis, but in 1972 the terrorist had half persuaded him.

It is quite true that violence is institutionalized in all forms of organized society. It is also true that, since all forms of organized society that we know—be it a nation, a city, a corporation, a school, a family—contain great inequalities of power, wealth and status, and since these inequalities are in the last resort defended by violence, anyone who lives in such a society, and accepts its rules, is committing some degree of oppressive violence.

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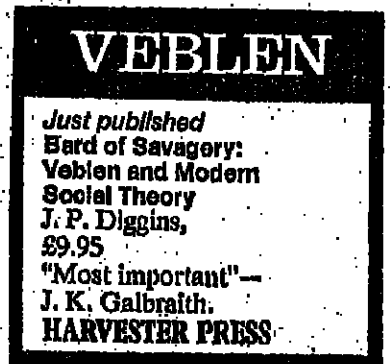
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his work was first published in 1972, for there has been a widening debate among the Marxists.

This does not lessen the interest and importance of this formidable long work, the second half of which is taken up with a detailed analysis of Morris's thought as expressed in *News from Nowhere* and other writings and lectures in which he was considering a transformed society. Meier is particularly concerned to counter the popular conception of Morris as "the greatest moral initiator of Communism within our tradition". In the postscript to his new edition Thompson suggests that Meier downgrades Morris's contribution by denying that he was capable of independent thought on matters of political theory. Those who were derived not so much from a "conversion" to Marxism as a gradual development from his own role in the Romantic tradition. The most significant steps on the way were created by his reading of Ruskin and his founding of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (1877), which forced him to consider the place of art in society. Thompson has a telling quotation from a pamphlet Morris wrote in 1880, i.e. before he became a socialist or had read any Marx: "So the life, habits and aspirations of all groups and classes of the community are founded on the economic conditions under which the people live, and it is impossible to exclude socio-political questions from the considerations of aesthetics."

Accordingly, Thompson sees Morris as a "Communist Utopian", who provided "a moving realism" of which the hardening arteries of orthodox Marxism did not take proper account. The utopianism was not just a hangover from Morris's earlier romantic standpoint, but an essential element in a forward-looking philosophy. Morris may be seen as our greatest dialectician of alienation, in terms of the concrete perception of the moralist and within the context of a particular English cultural tradition. And if that is so, he remains a contemporary figure.

Thompson's arguments appear valid, though perhaps in extracting Morris from an orthodox Marxist frame he makes rather too much of the objections to Meier's case. Certainly Morris emerges as a much clearer, more independent political thinker than has generally been appreciated, but Thompson goes a long way when suggesting that "Morris may be assimilated to Marxism only in the course of self-criticism and re-ordering within Marxism itself". For in Marxism today there appear to be many nations. Meier would not agree with Thompson's view that attempts to assimilate Morris to various forms of Social Democracy were given a check long ago. He freely admits that his own book was not all that influential, and this is borne out in some subsequent works.

Meier, on the other hand, obviously wrote his book with the view that the battle for Morris's political soul is still on, and he goes to enormous pains to demonstrate the impact of Marxism on Morris and to show that his sketch of Utopian Communism was based on Marx. In doing so, he probably presses too far the "conversion" theme, and the contention that Morris's ideas were partly based on unpublished Marxist writings. Perhaps he too may have had some second thoughts in the years since

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Fleet Street's talons

By William Beaver

PETER JOHNSON:
Recent Line Artists
184pp. Cassell, £6.95.

"However interesting, a battle may be," the Victorian war correspondent of the *Daily News* told a young special artist, "you must always get away before your communications are cut, for your material will be held up or never arrive. You must not be taken prisoner, for then you will be out of business completely. You must not get wounded, for then you will become a useless expense to your paper. And if you get killed, you will be an infernal fool."

Frederic Villiers, the recipient of Archibald Forbes's pithy advice, was one of the corps d'élite of Victorian war artists, whose drawings informed and moulded public opinion to a degree not had before. The vivid and telling line drawings from the edge of Empire or the Wild West produced an excitement and fuelled imagination in a way we can only dimly understand. The "specialist" further, that more, raised the question of the relation between art, mass exposure, and propaganda. They were the talons of an innovative, expanding Fleet Street which would never lack exciting copy whilst Melton Prior, Alfred and William Ward and Charles Fripp covered some distant front line and copy when they were caught up in creating thrilling adventures in Zululand or China.

modelled. And Sigurd the Volsung is double the extent of the *Volsung Saga* on which it is based. It is well known, of course, that Morris could spin verse with as great facility as he could weave tapestry. The great strength of these works, Miss Oberg defends as being in the tradition of Morris's time, as exemplified by Balzac, Trollope and even Wagner. She supports also the esoteric style of his prose romances—perhaps the chief impediment to their being read today. It was she contends,

a sensible and original response to a literary problem. He was faced with the same difficulty all translators and writers of historic fiction must face: how to convey the essence of a civilisation different from one's own language, intelligible to contemporary readers. . . . Morris's solution was to invent a diction that was foreign to Victorian England yet understandable to sympathetic readers. From this view, incidentally, Thompson dissents. "To attempt to make a new tongue" in that way was to disengage from, rather than to challenge, the sensibility of his time." Miss Oberg suggests that the great popularity of Tolkien's work may lead to a revival of interest in fantasy, and it is interesting to note that after being out of print for more than 50 years a new edition of the seven prose romances is announced for publication here in the next few months.

For them and for the preceding epic poems Miss Oberg has produced a closely written analysis and a unique which should lead into interest. Morris, she points out, chiefly wrote about heroes: active, aggressive and often brutal heroes, who when triumphant acted for the commonweal. His works were in no way influenced by Christianity, and indeed there is no evidence at all that he was religious. As the title of her useful study indicates, Morris's outlook was pagan, though "consistently primitivist, his particular form of paganism is highly civilized, far in advance of any primitive way of thinking". For those prepared to dive in at the deep end of Morrisian romance, Charlotte Oberg is an encouraging instructor and guide.

It is no criticism of Ian Bradley's concise and accurate account of Morris's life, work and associates that the immediate attraction of his book for many will be the 145 well-chosen illustrations that cover every aspect of Morris's life and interests. In addition to the well-known photographs of Morris and his friends, there include reproductions of his designs, furniture and interiors, of covers and illustrations taken from his books and pamphlets, and photographs of his political life that all in all would not only be a pleasure to look at but not easy to find elsewhere are not otherwise available between two covers.

The crisply written text holds the balance fairly between the popular conception of Morris as a designer and writer and as a political figure, and indeed there is true to say that he became a socialist he "cut himself off from the artistic world in which he had previously moved". Though few of that world sympathized with his "extreme" political views, it is a tribute to his character, standing and authority that he never lost their friendship and respect, nor that of the artistic establishment. After all, it was in 1893, after Tennyson's death, that he was sounded out as to whether he would accept the Laureateship.

The Shelley orbit

By Alethea Hayter

JANE DUNN:
Moon in Relapse
A Life of Mary Shelley
374pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £8.50.

The astronomical metaphor in the title of this biography is not an apt one. Jane Dunn's thesis is that the rays of Mary Shelley's own genius have been unfairly eclipsed by the shadow of Shelley's larger globe. But moons, eclipsed or not, give out no rays of their own; they need a sun to reflect from; and if we are to be astronomers of the nineteenth century this partnership has been an endless microscopic examination of the relationship between the two.

It can indeed be argued that Mary Godwin might have had a more contented life if she had never been drawn to Shelley's orbit. Though the elevation of snobbery which is often preferred against her is unjust, she did have a craving for order, safety, peace, a strong preference for ordinary affectionate home life. *Frankenstein*, in her intention, was aimed, we are told, to satisfy the "ambition of domestic affection", and even the monster is made to yearn to settle down with a wife of his own in South America. It is ironic that Sir Timothy Shelley regarded Mary as such a creature of domesticity, for she would have made a very suitable chaperone for Field Place. A settled home where her children could be brought up in safety, and she could study to her heart's content, would have been most welcome to Mary Shelley. Her husband's life proves, what she got, instead of the orderly life of a country gentleman's wife, was a gipsy chaos of incessant removals and journeys, regardless of her or her children's health, or her husband's affectionate intentions, dedicated to untrammelled love, peace and the advancement of mankind, but actually feeble, capricious, restless, almost manic depressive in its variations of mood, which Jane Dunn has well summed up as a happy mixture of the 19th.

But Mary Shelley would not have chosen, nor does Jane Dunn suggest that she should have. The book is a well-written, well-illustrated, and well-researched account of a life that was both a tragedy and a triumph. It is a book that should be read by all who are interested in the life of Mary Shelley, and in the life of the Romantic era. It is a book that is both a pleasure to read and a source of information. It is a book that is both a work of art and a work of scholarship. It is a book that is both a gift to the reader and a gift to the world.

The traveller remade

By John Bender

ROBERT HARRISON:
Eccentric Spaces
177pp. André Deutsch, £3.50.

All well travelled people of some education know places, buildings, places and buildings that they are supposed to enjoy more than they really do. In his *Eccentric Spaces* Robert Harrison tackles a score of these intractable embarrassments; surprisingly often he shows just the point of perspective from which to re-imagine their mysteries.

Because they have "an air of littleness", Mr. Harrison says, "no sort of book is more impossibly remote than a guidebook, a startling instance of the gap between literature and experience". Yet because his vivid prose successfully narrows this gap, he makes the reader feel that he is already there, knows the literal facts or who wants to transcend them. Wonderful trips might in truth be inspired by his book or greedily relished through its pages, though it offers not a single literary tour but a guide to the world of the imagination. Leading us to the odd or surprising door, Mr. Harrison slips away with trenchant words that enlarge our capacity for sonorous thinking and feeling. Only occasionally does their vividness turn coy or downright infuriating.

Truly eccentric spaces remake whoever unaffectedly enters their precincts, and this is Mr. Harrison's distinguishing capacity. He confronts with an ideal negative capability those relics, or landscape architecture, city planning, building, painting, writing, and even collecting, which demand either respect or some degree of self-surveillance. Reflection, not adjustment, is the key.

Tactics of the chancellor

By Philip Magnus

G. A. MATTHEW (Editor):
The Gladstone Diaries
Volume 5: 1855-1860. 617pp.
Volume 6: 1861-1868. 706pp.
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £40 the set.

Gladstone's diary, containing one-and-a-half times as many words as the Bible, starts in 1825, when the Prime Minister was a boy at Eton, and ends seventy-one years later in 1896. But although his diary probably did more than any other to make the nineteenth century more memorable in British history, he never dreamed of attempting to enlighten, entertain, or even interest posterity. Unlike Byron, as their respective papers cite to Harold Nicolson, Gladstone's diary is a record of his private life, not a public statement, and is a factual, unadorned, and uncomprehendingly abbreviated daily log of letters written and received, people seen and heard, and the minutiae of his life. Even so, he has attempted to write a diary, and his diary is a masterpiece of brevity and clarity. It is a diary that is both a work of art and a work of scholarship. It is a diary that is both a gift to the reader and a gift to the world.

The diary, which is being published in two volumes, is expected to fill fourteen volumes. It is being edited by Colin Matthew, who has been working on it for many years. The first volume, which covers the years 1825 to 1854, is now available. The second volume, which covers the years 1855 to 1860, is expected to be published in the near future. The diary is a masterpiece of brevity and clarity. It is a diary that is both a work of art and a work of scholarship. It is a diary that is both a gift to the reader and a gift to the world.

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Annals of the gutter

By Stephen Koss

G. A. CRANFIELD:
The Press and Society
From Caxton to Northcliffe
256pp. Longman, £7.95 (paperback, £3.95).

In the beginning was the Word. G. A. Cranfield does not go quite that far back, merely to the point at which the Word was first set in type. Even so, he has attempted to write a history of the press, and his history is a masterpiece of brevity and clarity. It is a history that is both a work of art and a work of scholarship. It is a history that is both a gift to the reader and a gift to the world.

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Tales of the vicarage

By Graham Howes

G. A. HAMMOND:
The Vicar and the Victorian
177pp. Holder and Stoughton, £3.50.

Indeed it is far from clear at whom the book is primarily aimed. Evidently not at ecclesiastical historians, for the sources are all secondary, and omit such basic items as those of W. R. Ward and Alan Gilbert (which would have helped to sharpen and update this account) as well as any references to the relevant academic journals. The one major fact of life for many Victorian incumbents, the presence of Dissenters in or near the parish, does not attract serious attention until the penultimate chapter.

But if the target is the general reader, then Mr. Hammond succeeds in providing an adequate, affectionate and undemanding descriptive account of the highly variegated social situations, activities and attitudes of Victorian clergymen. It comes most alive when his rather predictable sources—Kilvert, Hawker, Armstrong, etc.—are used to describe the public role of local clergy in pressing in the 1840s; for the setting-up of rural communities to combat social disorder in the countryside, although forgotten by Mr. Hammond, was not forgotten by many a humble, and hungry, parishioner.

Anyone looking for a more sharply focused view of the Victorian clergy than that provided here should turn to Owen Chadwick's *The Victorian Church*, while several recent monographs, notably James Obelkevich's penetrating and evocative close-up of religious life in nineteenth-century Lancashire, provides just the kind of precision and depth which Mr. Hammond's avowedly collage so often lacks.

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THE STATE OF FICTION

A SYMPOSIUM

with contributions from A. Alvarez, Brian Aldiss, Kingsley Amis, Martin Amis, Paul Bailey, J. G. Ballard, A. L. Barker, Stan Barstow, David Benedictus, Malcolm Bradbury, Melvyn Bragg, John Braine, Christine Brooke-Rose, Jeremy Brooks, Bridget Brontë, A. S. Byatt, Angela Carter, Isabel Colegate, William Cooper, Robert Coover, Elaine Feinstein, Eva Figes, Nicolas Freeling, Giles Gordon, Patricia Highsmith, Michael Holroyd, Dan Jacobson, Diane Johnson, Jennifer Johnston, Gabriel Josipovici, Mervyn Jones, Francis King, David Lodge, Ian McEwan, Olivia Manning, Stanley Middleton, Brian Moore, Helen Muir, Edna O'Brien, Julie O'Faolain, David Plante, Barbara Pryn, Frederic Raphael, Piers Paul Read, Alan Ross, Alan Sillitoe, Julian Symonds, Emma Tennant, Paul Theroux, Anthony Thwaite, William Trevor, Peter Vansittart, Auberon Waugh, Raymond Williams, Angus Wilson, A. N. Wilson.

In the summer issue of

THE NEW REVIEW

Single Copies £1.75 Annual Subscription £7.50
from The New Review, 11 Greek Street, London W1.

As laid down by Leibniz

By H. A. Feisenberger

UNIVERSAL ZACHERT (Editor):
Herrn August Bibliothek Wolfen-
büttel
Verzeichnis medizinischer und
naturwissenschaftlicher Drucke
1472-1830
Chronologischer Index
Volume 5, 450pp.
Volume 6, 437pp.
Volume 7, 411pp.
Nendeln (Liechtenstein): Kraus-
Thomson, Swfr540.

This is a very large-scale undertaking to make known to general scholarship the historic-medical and scientific sections of one of the most interesting European libraries. Founded by Duke Julius of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (r. 1568-86), its chief early creator was Duke August (1579-1666), a devoted book collector, who himself wrote a remarkably modern catalogue with full entries of titles, places and dates of printing, cross-references, etc. From his day to this, the careful cataloguing has continued, the library having had the benefit of being looked after by three great German scholars in succession, Hermann Conring (1605-81), professor of philosophy, medicine and law at Helmstedt, and author of a book on the organization and cataloguing of libraries; Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716), the second, who, in 1690, published a catalogue of the library (1690-99); and Gottfried Ephraim Lessing (1729-81), though it must be said about the latter, that—great connoisseur though he was—he did not enjoy administration and left the library in some disorder, even cut-

ting out woodcuts from books and presenting them to the Braunschweig-Kunstkabinett. The library was therefore from early days developed as a "Universitätsbibliothek", a scholarly library on universal lines, on the principles set out in Leibniz's *Idaea Librorum bibliothecae, publicae secundum classes scientiarum ordinandae*. The library is composed of three main sections, the original collection of Duke August, the University library of Helmstedt and the so-called "Mittlere Ausstellung", the acquisitions made from 1700-1950, from all of which the material in the publication under review is drawn.

Today the library contains about 450,000 printed books, 6,000 medieval manuscripts, 400 incunabula and a great map collection. A scheme for cataloguing by modern methods was begun about 1831 and several volumes—on manuscripts, maps, autographs, *livres de peintre* and bookplates—have been produced, all in admirable typographical form. It seems a pity therefore that the present publication—probably because of its great size and for economic reasons—had to be produced by a photographic reproduction of original typed slips which for some users at least will necessitate the use of a magnifying glass. It lists on 1,200 pages, in double columns about 21,000 titles of printed books in medicine, science and natural history published between 1472 and 1830. It is being published in four series, the first alphabetically by authors, the second chronologically, the third by places of printing and publishing, and the fourth by subject, thirteen volumes in all. The volumes under review constitute the first published section, the chronological one.

While one must be grateful for having given this most interesting historical survey from these varying points of view, one may perhaps question whether it would not have been sufficient to have one series with the full reproduction of the cards and just three more good indexes, instead of having the complete cards reproduced in full in each series. It would have reduced the size and also the very high price (the full series will eventually cost 2,520 Swiss francs in hardback and only a little less in paperback) without, in my opinion, detracting from its usefulness.

When considering the contents one must bear in mind that this is not a systematic collection of early medical and scientific books, but rather an accumulation within the confines of a general universal library which acquired the relevant publications more or less as they were published over a period of time. This is illustrated by the fact that so many of the great classics of scientific history are not present. It is significant that of the twenty-six relevant entries in the Grollier Club list only thirty-four are present, and of the 104 relevant entries in *Printing and the Mind of Man* only thirty-one. The missing titles are by no means all continental rarities and many of them are German. Although there is naturally a great preponderance of books published in Germany, it is a remarkably widely spread collection, including many Italian books and a good many English ones. From a technically bibliographical point of view, it must be said that some more general editing would have been useful, chiefly in the early section. The slips reproduced here were clearly produced by different people and are not

entirely uniform in their treatment. In this chronological series the entries under each year (or approximately year, when undated) are alphabetical by authors or, where anonymous, under subject or a catchword. In principle periodical publications are excluded, though a few comparatively short-lived collections of papers in the eighteenth century are included. Titles are reproduced very fully, the number of pages and illustrations is always given, but full bibliographical collations by signatures occur in only very few places (one example is *Fludius, De triplici vita, c. 1510*). Imperfections are noted, as are important provenances (such as Dürer's copy of the 1505 *Eucledis*).

It seems odd, however, that in a few cases references to relevant bibliographies are entered haphazardly, e.g. of all the many entries for Paracelsus, Sudhoff is quoted only once, Benzing just for one of Rauchlin's books, Borchling-Clausen only for one or two books in Low German.

In a catalogue of this large size one would hardly expect such bibliographical references at all, unless they were given methodically throughout. In Volume 5, page 422, the first edition of Harvey's *De generatione* is placed after the two continental reprints, so it seems that not all compilers used reference books regularly. For the 129 fifteenth-century books, references are given in every case to Hain, etc. but again not in an entirely uniform manner. Notice has not always been taken of the available information; the *Vincent de Beauvais*, for example, listed under 1472, would appear to be Goff V 292 (Strasbourg, R. Printer, not after 1477); the 1473 Gentile da Foligno should read (Padua), Johann Furs-

ter, 1473; there exists no Keiser of 1475 (presumably this is the second edition, Venice, Graden, 1484); Hieronymus is surely (Louvain, Velderer); the Albozen, 1485, is gesta Augsburg; the printer of both editions of Sacrobosco 1483 and 1489 are known, but not quoted; the printer of the 14th Hebrew Avicenna is Amel; Joseph Ashkenazi and there are several similar cases. There are given literally in the various languages, with varying spelling and occasional original misspelling, but in the case of the early books it is not always clear which is the printer and which the publisher where both are mentioned.

A most excellent feature is the complete list of titles and authors in collected works and complete volumes together with appropriate cross-references; for example, the 1546 Guy de Chauliac gives all the different texts by other authors, the eleven-volume *Galen* of 1538 cites all the different texts in the volume; all sections of the eleven-volume Rheede tot Drakenstede, *Hortus Malabaricus*, 1658, are given in detail. Dissertations are indicated as such, a few have been taken to have slipped in which are hardly scientific, such as collections of engravings, c. 1600, *Kat van Mander's* book on the relation, 1618, a congratulatory libretto addressed to Duke August, 1633, a prayer-book of the same year. But taking everything into account this very comprehensive publication, due for completion this year, will be a most valuable tool for the study of medical and scientific source material and for historical development.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

Librarian (Children's)

(Ref. K.147)

£3,108-£3,836/£4,431

Applications are invited from persons who are Chartered Librarians, or have successfully completed the Part II Examination of the Library Association, including List A, Paper 35 'Library Service to Young People' for the post of Librarian for the Library of the Borough of Bromley, based at Anley Road, Anley, Bromley, Kent SE16 5JG. Candidates should be experienced in children's library work and possess a good working knowledge of the children's literature. The successful applicant would be required to work two Saturdays out of three and on late evening (6 p.m.) a week. Starting salary according to qualifications and experience but £4,017 (inc.) will be paid to applicants possessing at least the Part II Examination of the Library Association. Application forms from Assistant Chief Executive (Bromley), Town Hall, Bromley, Kent SE16 5JG, Tel. 0181 853, ext. 3318. Closing date: 21st August, 1978.

FALKIRK DISTRICT COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

LIBRARIAN

BIBLIOGRAPHIC AND REFERENCE SERVICES SECTION

£2,841-£4,491

plus £213 supplement

A vacancy exists for a Librarian to become part of a team of Librarians to run the Bibliographic and Reference Services for Falkirk District Council. The job is a demanding one calling for initiative, initiative, drive and, above all, energy. Further details and application forms are available from the Personnel Services, Falkirk District Council, Municipal Buildings, Falkirk, and these should be submitted to the Personnel Services, Falkirk, by 28th August, 1978.

REMINDER

COPY FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

IN THE T.L.S.

SHOULD ARRIVE NOT LATER THAN 10.30 a.m.

MONDAY PRECEDING THE DATE OF PUBLICATION

CITY OF EDINBURGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Applications are invited from experienced Chartered Librarians for the post of:

HEAD OF LENDING SERVICES

Salary on scale £6,186-£7,050 per annum inclusive of supplement

As a member of the Professional Services Management Team, the Head of Lending Services shares in the overall management of the City Libraries, and has responsibility for the Central Library Lending Service, 21 Community Libraries, Mobile Libraries and Youth Services. Applicants should have experience of a wide range of public library services, together with an awareness of current practice in community library provision. A particular requirement of the post is the motivation of professional staff to initiate organisational change and development. The post is based at the Central Library and carries a casual car user's allowance. Disturbance, removal and lodging allowances are payable in approved cases. Application forms and further details are available from the City Librarian, Central Library, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EG, for return by a fortnight from the date of this advertisement.

County of Cleveland

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

COUNTY LIBRARIES

Branch Librarians (2 posts)

(a) £3,732-£4,832 (includes supplement)

(b) £3,732-£4,146 (includes supplement)

Applications are invited from qualified Librarians with relevant experience for the above posts at Grange-town and Norton. In approved cases, financial assistance with the removal of household effects will be available. Temporary housing accommodation may be available in approved cases, within the County area.

Forms of application and job descriptions from the County Librarian, Central Library, Victoria Square, Middlesbrough, Cleveland. Closing date: 21st August, 1978.

Directorate of Community Services

SENIOR ASSISTANT (LIBRARIES)

£4,167-£4,581 inc. (grading under review)

If you have suitable Library qualification and experience we need a Senior Assistant to undertake varied duties in an Area or Branch Library.

For informal discussion, phone Mr Elliott on 790 1818, ex. 99.

Application forms from Personnel Services, Town Hall, Patriot Square, London, E2, or telephone 01-981 0077, quoting reference 9/40. Closing date 28th August.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

Directorate of Community Services (Libraries)

SENIOR ASSISTANT

£3,174-£4,088

This post offers an interesting variety of work including readers advisory work and, on occasion, taking charge of a small branch library. Applicants should have relevant experience and preferably be qualified.

Application forms from Personnel Services, Town Hall, Patriot Square, London, E2, or telephone 01-981 0077 (Ansaione) please quote reference 9/39. Closing date 28th August.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

Buckinghamshire County Council

Chief Assistant

County Reserve Stock

County Library Headquarters, Aylesbury

Salary: AP 4/5, £4,245-£5,073 p.a.

Minimum qualification

Chartered Librarian

NJC Conditions of Service. Successful applicant subject to medical examination. Assistance given towards removal expenses including legal and Estate Agents' fees in appropriate cases. Applications (NO FORMS) enclosing a large stamped addressed envelope, together with the names and addresses of two referees, to the County Librarian, County Hall, Aylesbury, Bucks, from whom further details can be obtained. Applications should be received within two weeks of the appearance of this advertisement.

WEST LONDON INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, etc.

TEMPORARY LIBRARY ASSISTANT

(Lancaster House, Isleworth)

Required for clerical/typing duties at the above address. Applicants with similar experience would be preferred but it is not essential provided they are competent typists and neat in record-keeping ability.

The appointment is of a 26 weeks duration, 36 hours per week with occasional evenings and Saturday morning duties involved on a rota basis.

Salary Scale: Clerical 1 (bar) at 21 years and over, £2,841-£3,180 inclusive.

Application forms from: Assistant Registrar (Personnel), West London Institute of Higher Education, Gordon House, 300 St. Margaret's Road, Twickenham TW1 1PT. Tel. 01-891 0121, ext. 295.

Applications are invited for the chair of

ENGLISH LITERATURE

In the University of Basel, which will fall vacant on October 1, 1979

The field of instruction covers the whole of English literature from about 1600. Instruction is in English and German.

Applications with curriculum vitae, list of publications and two references to Dekanat der Philosophisch-Historischen Fakultät der Universität, Petersplatz 1, CH 4051 Basel (Switzerland), by September, 1978.

GUILLIE-ALLES LIBRARY AND MUSEUM, GUERNSEY

Principal Librarian

Salary £5,922-£6,711

The Guille-Alles Library is at present a subscription library. It is the intention that it should become a free library and the transitional phase is about to begin. The Board of Management wishes to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person to assist in the planning, process and in the administration of the library. The salary will be in the range £5,922-£6,711 and the post will be permanent. Further information may be obtained from the Board of Management, Guille-Alles Library and Museum, Market Street, St. Peter Port, Guernsey, GY.

SCHOOL LIBRARIAN

£4,428-£4,812 Epsom

For Rosebery School. The post provides good opportunities for initiative in developing the school library as a resource centre to meet the needs of pupils and teaching staff. The duties of the post involve close liaison with the County Library Service.

Applicants should be experienced Chartered Librarians. A degree qualification could be an advantage.

Application form from Area Education Officer, Bridge House, Bridge Street, Leatherhead, Tel. Leatherhead 77801.

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust

The Ironbridge Gorge Museum has been allocated the important collection of Industrial Revolution pictures, prints, drawings and books of the late Sir Arthur Elton which complements the museum's existing holdings in these fields. Buildings already available to the Trust are to be converted within the next twelve months to provide gallery space and a substantially expanded research library. In order to plan this work and to ensure the proper management, documentation and development of these collections the museum wishes to establish a small team of appropriately qualified and experienced staff and invites applications for the following posts:

Curator of the Elton Collection

Salary: £4,759 to £5,512 inclusive of all supplements. Candidates should have a degree and museum or gallery experience, preferably the Diploma of the Museums Association, and an extensive knowledge of prints and drawings with particular reference to the Industrial Revolution, or research experience in industrial or economic history. Organisational ability and a record of published work desirable. Quote ref. 3/78.

Librarian

Salary: £3,862 to £4,615 inclusive of all supplements. Candidates should be chartered Librarians with knowledge of the history of industry and technology. The Librarian will be responsible for the collection of books, trade journals and catalogues, photographs, maps and printed ephemera currently totalling over 30,000 items. An industrial archaeological collection centre is envisaged in the future and the Librarian will be involved in its planning and operation. Quote ref. 4/78.

Documentation Assistant

Salary: £3,396 to £3,774 inclusive of all supplements. Candidates should have museum or library cataloguing or documentation experience and a knowledge of information retrieval systems. The person appointed will be responsible, in co-operation with the Museum Documentation Association, for developing and implementing a comprehensive accession cataloguing system. Quote ref. 5/78. All posts are supernumerary within the Salop County Council scheme, housing is available and assistance will be given with removal expenses. Starting salary dependent upon qualifications and experience. Further particulars and application forms can be obtained by writing (please quote reference) to the Director, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, Ironbridge, Shropshire, Salop TF8 7AW. Tel. 0952 451 3522. Applications should be submitted to the Director by August 25, 1978.

REMINDER

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LIBRARIANS

LONDON, S.W.7

INSTITUTE OF CANCER RESEARCH

Requires an ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN to assist the Librarian in the day-to-day running of the library. The successful candidate should be a Chartered Librarian and have experience in a medical or scientific library. Salary Scale £3,862 to £4,615 inclusive of all supplements. Applications in duplicate with the curriculum vitae, to the Librarian, Institute of Cancer Research, 44-52, Lincoln Road, London, S.W.4. Tel. 01-874 8100.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Bedfordshire County Library

Luton District

Assistant Librarian

Luton Reference and information team

Applications are invited for the above post in a busy reference and information department at Luton Central Library. The successful applicant will be responsible for the newspaper and periodicals collection, liaison with the local government information service at County Hall Library and assistance with general reference and information work.

Salary: Qualified Librarian, AP2, £3,279-£3,851 inclusive of Phase 1 supplement.

Chartered Librarian, Grade AP3-5, £3,732-£5,073 (inclusive of Phase 1 supplement).

Progression beyond £4,146 and £4,632 dependent upon responsibility and experience. Closing date, 28th August.

For further details and application form from Nigel Fisk, County Library Headquarters, Bedford, Tel. 56181, ext. 38.

Bedfordshire

Librarian—c. £3,000

and

Library Assistant—c. £2,250

CAP are a growing company, consultancy employing over 700 people throughout the U.K. We need two people to join our department of seven supplying the information needs of our clients. These needs cover technical, commercial, marketing and internal information from both published and unpublished sources.

The Librarian will be responsible for ordering, cataloguing and storing library material, circulating journals and controlling loans of library material. Someone with at least a "A" level education, preferably also a recently qualified Librarian would be most suitable. You should be methodical, reliable, and able to work on your own initiative.

For the Library Assistant position, someone aged 18+ with a "A" level education is required. The job involves circulating journals internally, photocopying and filing relevant information and building and maintaining files of cuttings from journals and newspapers. You should be bright and able to work without supervision.

We offer LVs, four weeks annual holiday, an annual season ticket loan and other benefits. Please telephone for more information Pam Duggan on 01-242 0021 or write to her at:

CAP Limited, CAP House, 14/15 Great James Street, London WC1

Yale University Press

Director

This position will be open on July 1, 1979, in consequence of Chester Kerr's decision to retire from it at that time. Letters of application, including a c.v. and references, are now invited. Write to:

Chairman, Search Committee
Box 37 Yale Law School
New Haven, CT 06520

The Director is the chief executive officer of a leading and long-established university press. With a professional and support staff of about sixty persons, it publishes around ninety books a year, primarily of scholarly interest. Annual sales exceed \$3,000,000, and there is an active London office.

The Press is a department of Yale University. It operates with a substantial degree of autonomy, under the general supervision of a Board of Governors and its committees, which include a faculty Publications Committee.

Yale University is an affirmative action—equal opportunity employer.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

AMENITIES DEPARTMENT

Assistant Librarian

£3,108-£4,431

Required to assist the Branch Librarian in the efficient operation and administration of the Branch.

Applicants should hold a relevant qualification.

Hours of duty are 38 per week worked on a rota basis to cover the hours during which the Libraries are open to the public. Applicants may be required to work in any of the Council's Library establishments.

Application form, returnable by 26th August, and detailed job description from Chief Personnel Officer, Town Hall, Catford, London SE8 4PL, or telephone 01-880 7800 (24-hour Ansaione service) quoting appropriate reference AM94/TLS and job title.

Directorate of Scientific Services

Information Officer

Salary range £5,608-£5,986 p.a.

An Information Officer is required to assist the Scientist—Catching Quality. The Officer will be responsible for compiling scientific information and researching data on toxic and other substances likely to enter or be produced in the Region's Water Catchment Area.

The person appointed should preferably have ability in chemical and other Scientific nomenclature and experience in compiling and maintenance of scientific records. A knowledge of computerised retrieval would also be useful but not essential.

Candidates must be graduates (or hold an equivalent professional qualification) preferably in a scientific subject but non-scientists who can demonstrate ability in information work will be considered. The post is based at the Magdon Sewage Treatment Works, Isleworth, Middlesex.

Application forms available from the Assistant Director (Personnel-Staff), New River Head, Rosebery Avenue, London, E.C.1, Tel.: 01-435 2800, ext. 1678. Closing date for applications: 28th August, 1978.

Thames Water

RECORDS OFFICER

We need a Records Officer for our Records Office, which is part of our busy Library and Records Department. The successful candidate, who will report to the Head of Library and Records, will have supervisory responsibility for a staff of six and a large degree of freedom for personal initiative.

Applicants, who should be qualified Librarians with experience of Company reports and records, will be expected to cope with a wide variety of problems and take an active part in a programme for improving services such as current awareness, S.D.I. and subject indexing. Familiarity with national security procedures would be an advantage.

Please write, telephone or call for an application form to:

David Barnes, Ref: C618 Personnel & Training Dept., Site A, British Aerospace Dynamics Group, Stevenage-Bristol Division, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2DA. Telephone Stevenage 2422, Ext 3280 (Out of office hours, Stevenage 2878).

BRITISH AEROSPACE DYNAMICS GROUP

STEVENAGE